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BOSTON UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

Thesis

**ISSUE OWNERSHIP IN PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARIES:
A 2016 CASE STUDY**

by

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B.A., Boston University, 2020

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work to my family: my parents, Michael and Jana,
my sisters Emma and Addie, my grandparents Wayne and Ruth, and
Bill and Meredyth, my brother-in-law Nick, my niece Cora, and
my partner, Alli, who has probably read these drafts more than I have.

ISSUE OWNERSHIP IN PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARIES:

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, I discuss the area of issue-ownership as it applies to the 2016 presidential primaries. The central discussion of the paper features a tradeoff between viability and issues in primary contests. Viability, which is presented through *The Party Decides: Presidential Nominations Before and After Reform* by Marty Cohen et al. as party elites deciding who should be the nominee, and issues that are salient to primary voters, and thus candidates, which I present as the more likely reason for how nominees are selected. Using a combination of national polls and analysis of candidates' Twitter feeds, I hope to compare data on who primary and caucus voters support and which issues are important to them. The hypothesis is simple: if candidates stake claims on issues that voters care about and frequently remind voters of that via Twitter, they will receive a bump in the polls.

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INTRODUCTION

Much of the literature around primary elections for President of the United States suggests that candidates with endorsements and perceived general election viability gain eventual nomination for the party. Despite this, the status quo in the literature tells modern viewers almost nothing about how or why the last few nominees won their primary. The old view does not suggest that an African-American Senator who has been in federal office for two years, a liberal Republican who is a millionaire Mormon, a woman whose husband used to be the President, or the self-proclaimed billionaire who had never held public office, would be able to clinch nominations. Thus, a new factor in the literature needs to be unearthed to address what drove the nominations of Barack Obama in 2008, Mitt Romney in 2012, and Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump in 2016. The answer lies in how the candidates were perceived by primary voters. In this paper, I will analyze what allows candidates to “own” salient issue and policies within their party primary, therefore clinching the nomination, and use the 2016 primaries as a case study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The canon of literature on primaries comes from Cohen et. al's *The Party Decides: Presidential Nominations Before and After Reform*. This contribution revolutionized the literature and argued that endorsements are the strongest predictor for nominations after the McGovern-Fraser reforms in 1972. Though the authors are not sure

why voters follow the cues from party elites and leaders.¹ The end of the book, which was released in 2008 around the time of the nomination of soon-to-be President Barack Obama directly contradicted the findings, since Obama did not receive as many elite endorsements as Senator Hillary Clinton.² The authors say that the elites simply changed their mind after Obama won the Iowa caucuses.³

The theory, if it ever extended past 2008, does not hold up in the 2020 Democratic primary. Senator Kamala Harris was in second place among Democratic Presidential candidates according to the “Endorsement Primary,” which is tracked by the website FiveThirtyEight and roughly similar to metrics used by Cohen et al. to calculate the weight of endorsements.⁴ Harris ended her campaign before the calendar hit the year 2020, despite having the second most endorsement points.⁵ Moreover, Candidate Donald Trump in the Republican primary in 2016 did not receive his first endorsement until three weeks after the Iowa Caucus,⁶ and he finished in second place in the first vote of the election cycle.⁷ Endorsements seem to not play as much of a role in the primary process

¹ Cohen, Marty, Karol, David, Hans, Noel, and Zaller, John. *The Party Decides: Presidential Nominations Before and After Reform*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid Chapter 10.

⁴ “The 2020 Endorsement Primary.” FiveThirtyEight, December 3, 2019. FiveThirtyEight’s point scale is calculated using the following logic: 10 points (Former presidents, vice presidents and current national party leaders); 8 points (Governors); 6 points (U.S. Senators); 5 points (Former presidential and vice-presidential nominees, former national party leaders, 2020 presidential candidates who have dropped out); 3 points (U.S. Representatives and Mayors of large cities); 2 points (Officials in statewide elected offices or State legislative leaders); 1 point (other Democratic National Committee Members).

⁵ Herndon, Astead W., Shane Goldmacher, and Jonathan Martin. “Kamala Harris Is Dropping Out of 2020 Presidential Race.” *The New York Times*. The New York Times, December 3, 2019.

⁶ Bycoffe, Aaron. “The 2016 Endorsement Primary.” FiveThirtyEight, June 7, 2016.

⁷ “Iowa Caucus Election Results 2016.” *The New York Times*. The New York Times, September 29, 2016.

as they once did. For this reason, my analysis of what it takes for candidates to win their party's nomination will not regard endorsements as the reason for candidate success.

Cohen et al. perfectly captured the nomination process and its mechanisms from post-McGovern-Fraser until 2008, which is when the nature of presidential primaries began to change. The authors are not the only ones whose work has not endured the test of time, as many accounts of primary literature is out of date. Aldrich and Rickershauser (2007) tested the effects of horse race coverage, perceived electability and policy issues as part of a study conducted on college undergraduate students in an introductory political science course prior to the Iowa caucus in 2004.⁸ A major flaw with the study conducted is that it did not include the eventual winner of the state, and eventual Democratic nominee, Senator John Kerry. Aldrich and Rickershauser conclude that “voters do not know much about candidates in primary elections, but our experiment adds to the body of evidence suggesting that voters use both issue emphasis and electability to assess candidates. This suggests that people do vote strategically.”⁹ Like most authors in the literature, they use the terms “electability” or “viability” as a key assessment that voters make. These are ambiguous terms in the literature and in public discourse, as no one can pinpoint what it takes for candidates to end up in the White House. Certainly, of the last few nominees in either party since 2008, electability or general election viability

⁸ Rickershauser, Jill, and John H. Aldrich. “‘It’s the Electability, Stupid’ – or Maybe Not? Electability, Substance, and Strategic Voting in Presidential Primaries.” *Electoral Studies* 26, no. 2 (June 2007): 371–80.

⁹ Ibid.

are not terms that come to mind as the nominees did not fit the typical mold of presidential candidates.

What makes candidates viable is their ability to grapple with the key issues of that election cycle. Candidates are tailored for success given the political moment of their campaign. For example, Senator Barack Obama would have likely not been as successful if he had run in another time. But, in 2008 when the country was still reeling from a very unpopular Iraq War, Obama was able to capitalize on being the face of the anti-war effort while his opponents in the Democratic primary, Sen. Hillary Clinton and Sen. John Edwards, had both supported the initial invasion.¹⁰

Ansolabehere and Iyengar make a key contribution to the issue ownership literature. While not centered in primaries, they observe that “the degree [to which] candidates enjoy a favorable reputation on some issue, their support is likely to be boosted by news coverage of this issue. Republicans will gain from news coverage of crime while Democrats will benefit from news about unemployment. In short, news coverage of ‘owned’ issues independently shifts voting preference toward the ‘owner’.”¹¹ Voters and the media buy into a party when they have a reputation on a certain issue, and the same should be true for individual candidates competing in a primary. The importance of the news media in this day in age is less important than when the authors were writing in 1994, since voters now do not have to turn on the TV or read a newspaper

¹⁰ Zeleney, Jeff. “As Candidate, Obama Carves Antiwar Stance.” *New York Times*. February 7, 2007.

¹¹ Ansolabehere, Stephen and Iyengar, Shanto. “Riding The Wave And Claiming Ownership Over Issues: The Joint Effects Of Advertising And News Coverage In Campaigns.” *Public Opinion Quarterly*, Volume 58, Issue 3, Fall 1994.

to find out what position a candidate takes on certain issues. While this paper dealt with advertisements, and the authors note that its goal is “always to influence voter preference” so too are social media posts, which allows candidates to move past the traditional veil that media has over candidates. Moreover, this study concerned two different levels of campaigns, the 1992 Senate election in California and the Presidential election in the same year. Comparing different kinds of races does not help increase the external validity of the findings

Stone et al. hypothesize that “voters use party affiliation, visibility, and viability to narrow the field of candidates. They then compare the expected-utility gains of electing any of the remaining candidates. If no clear preference emerges, voters consider their affect for the candidates and reconsider viability.”¹² While this statement may have been true in 1995, certainly the visibility factor is long gone. Candidates do not have to wait to appear on the news to get their name out to a large audience of voters. While television appearances still play a vital role for candidates in communicating their message to voters¹³ the role of social media cannot be ignored. Gupta-Carlson explained the role of Obama’s 2008 social media campaign, and how it was able to remove the veil that traditional media sources used to screen candidates for voters. Obama was successfully able to interact directly with voters, building upon the

¹² Stone, Walter J., Ronald B. Rapoport, and Lonna Rae Atkeson. “A Simulation Model of Presidential Nomination Choice.” *American Journal of Political Science* 39.1 (1995): [135–161](#).

¹³ Ian-Hua Zhu, J. Ronald Milavsky, Rahul Biswas, Do Televised Debates Affect Image Perception More Than Issue Knowledge?: A Study of the First 1992 Presidential Debate, *Human Communication Research*, Volume 20, Issue 3, March 1994, Pages 302–333

¹⁴ Benoit, William L. and Airne, David. “Issue Ownership for Non-Presidential Television Spots.” *Communication Quarterly*, 2005.

framework constructed by Howard Dean's 2004 chase for the Democratic nomination, while still maintaining a presence on traditional news as well.¹⁵ Social media is a catalyst for the new primary environment, and Trump is a perfect example of how successful candidates can be when it is used well.¹⁶ Using social media, candidates are able to directly raise policy issues with voters that contrast them from other candidates running for the nomination. Social media posts are essentially press releases that are much more accessible to most voters.

Petrocik and Benoit gave an early indication that the traditional media is an imperfect actor to disseminate candidates' message to the public, even before the social media era. The authors found that "the issue content of the campaigns is uncorrelated with the issue content of the Times coverage of the campaigns, that the issue content of the Times coverage is uncorrelated with variation in the issue concerns of the electorate, but that the issue concerns of the electorate are correlated with the varying issue agendas of the candidates' campaigns. If, as the theory of issue-ownership proposes, candidates help to shape or only prime the issue concerns of voters, they do not seem to do it through the news media."¹⁷ Social media only allows more connection between candidates and voters, and the reach that social media has further enables candidates to spread their message more efficiently than relying on traditional news.

¹⁵ Gupta-Carlson, Himanee. "Re-Imagining the Nation: Storytelling and Social Media in the Obama Campaigns." *PS, Political Science & Politics* 49, no. 1 (01, 2016).

¹⁶ Confessore, Nicholas. "For Whites Sensing Decline, Donald Trump Unleashes Words of Resistance." *The New York Times*. The New York Times, July 13, 2016.

¹⁷ Petrocik, J. R., Benoit, W. L. and Hansen, G. J. "Issue Ownership and Presidential Campaigning, 1952–2000." *Political Science Quarterly*, 2003.

A counterpoint could be made that candidates are simply emphasizing the issues that voters care about, not necessarily that candidates are emphasizing their records.

Undoubtedly, candidates emphasize issues that voters care about. The key is that candidates first speak about their personal history within a given problem, staking claim

on a key issue, and then move to emphasize that issue. Speaking from a position of authority on a



Figure 1

certain topic should give a cue to voters that the candidate is the best qualified to tackle, and own, that issue leading to a boost in the polls. Figure 1 is a perfect example of what the goal of issue ownership is.¹⁸ Candidates are trying to get voters to trust them to execute their policy preferences on issues they care about, and speaking from positions of authority by mentioning previous experience successfully dealing with the issues helps. It is exactly what Petrocik argues that parties do when trying to win votes.

Much of the literature contends that primaries are much different from general elections since many candidates are similar in their ideological views, thus rendering party identification as a useless cue for primary voters.¹⁹ While candidates may be similar ideologically in primary campaigns, the issues they emphasize and claim to own provides lanes for each candidate to succeed. Petrocik's seminal work on issue ownership found that voters perceive differences between the parties in their ability to handle different

¹⁸ Cruz, Ted. Twitter Post. March 3, 2016, 8:36 PM.
<https://twitter.com/tedcruz/status/705582782647398400>.

¹⁹ Stone.

policy problems.²⁰ Typically, Republicans own issues like foreign policy and taxes, while Democrats own education and the environment.²¹ While his study does not include the study of primary campaigns, Petrocik believes that “while party is a major source of an issue handling reputation any characteristic that distinguishes candidates might establish the differential. It can, for example, operate in primary elections where a candidate may create an advantageous agenda by emphasizing issues in a way which persuades the more politicized voters who show up in primaries that he is especially committed to the concerns of a ‘real’ Democrat. Alternatively, a personal characteristic can convey ownership of an issue: gender can determine who is the more credible candidate on matters of sex discrimination, a retired war hero is a particularly credible commentator on military security. Issue handling competence is the key.”²² In primaries, issue emphasis, synonymous with issue ownership in this sense, will be a driving force for the competitive campaigns.

This paper will split from Petrocik in a key way. Petrocik contends that voters have preconceived notions about which parties are better at handling certain issues simply because they have done so in the past.²³ For example, Democrats have tackled and will continue to tackle healthcare and the environment, while Republicans have dealt with taxes and foreign policy. However, in primaries, voters usually have to be introduced to candidates, since very few candidates come with high name-identification

²⁰ Petrocik, John R. "Issue Ownership in Presidential Elections, with a 1980 Case Study." *American Journal of Political Science* 40, no. 3, 1996.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

and a strong policy background that is familiar to the public. The best way for candidates to introduce themselves and thus their record to voters is through the first few primary debates.²⁴²⁵ For this study, I analyzed the first two debates from the Republican and Democratic primaries of 2016 to see which issues candidates made a claim on a certain issue. When candidates brought up their record on a certain issue, I noted their claim on the issue. Such as then-candidate Donald Trump saying that since he has made billions of dollars he is the best candidate to handle the economy, or Secretary Hillary Clinton laying claim to healthcare since she helped create and expand the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).

As Klüver and Sagarzazu note, “issue ownership theory argues that political parties emphasize policy issues on which they are considered to be competent. By raising the public salience of the issues that they ‘own’, political parties try to steer public debate towards issues on which they have a competitive advantage over their opponents.”²⁶ The parallels between the focus of most issue-ownership literature, the parties, can easily be drawn to the candidates competing in primaries. Similarly, to the primaries, in the general election candidates in the primaries want to highlight their strengths. That is why in debates, when candidates are introducing themselves to voters, they will highlight their previous record on key issues. For this reason, I rely on debates as a measure of when candidates attempt to make a claim on an issue.

²⁴ “Republican Debate: Read the Transcript of the Primetime Debate.” Time. Time, August 11, 2015.

²⁵ “Full Transcript: Democratic Presidential Debate.” The New York Times. The New York Times, October 14, 2015.

²⁶ Klüver, Heike and Sagarzazu, Iñaki. “Setting the Agenda or Responding to Voters? Political Parties, Voters and Issue Attention.” *West European Politics*, 2016.

Perhaps, primaries can be compared to multi-party democracies that are common in Europe. Walgrave, Van Camp and Tresch explore issue ownership in the political parties of Belgium.²⁷ The authors elaborate on the two kinds of issue ownership, associative and competence. The authors define associative as “voters' perception of a party's commitment to deal with an issue.... [and competence as] voters' perception of a party's capacity to deal with an issue successfully.”²⁸ In this research, the competence-side of issue ownership is heavily relied upon since voters ultimately put their trust behind a candidate to deliver on their promises to fix the pressing issues of the election. During debates, which are essentially auditions and thus opportunities to explain their record on issues, candidates will declare their competency on topics that matter the most to voters.

The point of this research is to see if candidates actually talk about the issue they claim to own, and thus receive a bump in the polls the following week. It does not make sense for candidates to shy away from discussing their record on the most important issues of an election, primary or general. It would be difficult for candidates to be associative in primary campaigns since so few have national profiles. In other words, few candidates would be able to leverage their experience on national issues unless they have a national profile. However, that does not mean it does not happen. Vice President Biden is a tremendous current-to-this-paper example of associative issue ownership, since he will surely be linked to the work he did in the Obama administration. The theory would

²⁷ Walgrave, Stefaan, Van Camp, Kirsten, and Tresch, Anke. Measuring issue ownership with survey questions. A question wording experiment. *Electoral Studies* 290-99, 2016.

²⁸ Ibid.

follow that he would emphasize his history as the Vice President in the 2020 Democratic primary.

Flowers, Haynes and Crespin address the effects of media on presidential primaries, showing how the media acts as a veil for horse race coverage. Essentially, the media is “handicapping the contenders... to justifiably narrow their coverage to only the most viable candidates... [the authors] also find that the national media provides a particularly hostile environment for candidates who want to talk about the issues.”²⁹ The authors, however, forget what makes candidates viable: their record on the issues. As stated before, Obama likely would not have been as successful if he ran during a period in which the American public was not hostile to war. The authors focus too much on what the media does, instead of candidate behavior. The hostility that exists towards the news media today is likely lessening the impact it would have on how individuals decide to cast their vote in primaries, since a swath of Americans no longer trust media outlets.³⁰ Thus, studying how candidates wish to display themselves to voters is a more effective way to study voting behavior rather than with a news media tint.

Danmore addresses issue convergence in presidential elections, which is obviously a major part of primary campaigns, and therefore to this research. Candidates will surely make claims over multiple issues and will be competing with rivals over that topic. As Danmore suggests, “The analysis presented [in his paper] suggests that

²⁹ Flowers, Julianne F., Audrey A. Haynes, and Michael H. Crespin. “The Media, the Campaign, and the Message.” *American Journal of Political Science* 47.2 (2003): 259–273.

³⁰ Daly, Emma. “Rising Hostility to Media Threatens Real Democracy.” *Human Rights Watch*, May 3, 2018.

occurrences of issue convergence in presidential campaigns are quite frequent and are a function of the importance of an issue to the electorate, voters' expectations about the type of issues presidential candidates should discuss, candidates' poll standings, and candidates' attempts to reestablish the linkages between their candidacies and issues associated with their parties in the face of their opponent's attempts to issue trespass.”³¹

Issue ownership usually contends that parties dominate certain issues, though some issues are elastic, such as the economy. In this piece, Danmore allows for a broader interpretation of issue ownership, with parties making claims on the same issue. This candidate behavior applies in primary situations as well, where multiple candidates will try to own the same issue.

Patterson conducts a study of the news media and the 2016 election. In the piece, the author identifies key issues that contributed to candidate success: “Immigration was the issue that worked most clearly in Trump’s favor. Although news coverage of his position included criticisms, it was accompanied by statements of solidarity from Republicans and was framed as the issue that was propelling him upward in the polls.”³² The study, like most pieces on primaries, acknowledges the power of news media. However, as the point about Trump and immigration highlights above, some issues were immune from the critiques of the news media. Clearly, Trump’s immigration message

³¹ Danmore, David F. “Issue Convergence in Presidential Campaigns.” *Political Behavior* 27, no. 1 March 2005. 71–97.

³² Patterson, Thomas E., “Pre-Primary News Coverage of the 2016 Presidential Race: Trump's Rise, Sanders' Emergence, Clinton's Struggle.” June 20, 2016.

was popular with voters, but despised by the media. Yet, Trump won anyway and indeed saw polling bumps from his issue stances that aligned with a GOP primary electorate.

Cole and Hawthorne attempt to remedy the 2008 general election with the theory of issue ownership since Obama was able to steal issues such as foreign policy and the economy away from his opponent Sen. John McCain.³³ Using the candidates' nomination acceptance speeches, the authors match words associated with Democratic and Republican issues. The authors find that their first "hypothesis was supported by the data as both Obama and McCain referenced issues owned by their own party more than the other candidate. Additionally, these results support previous research reporting that during the general election the Democratic candidate tends to move to the right and mention more Republican issues."³⁴ However, for my research I have decided that these issues do not have party labels. As discussed below, I used the top issues for all Americans, not party specific, when conducting my research. These top issues are likely to be more fluid, not belonging to either party, since most Americans agree they are top priorities. Candidates will thus be likely to talk about a wide range of issues in the debates and attempt to make a claim on them.

The existing literature regarding presidential primaries does not explain recent events such as the last few nominees for either party, a new literature needs to be married to explain these recent developments. That is why I have posited that issue ownership is

³³ Cole, Hayley J., and Hawthorne, Joshua. "Issue ownership trends and tensions in 2008: Obama, the transformative Democrat?" *Argumentation and Advocacy*, vol. 50, no. 2, 2013.

³⁴ Ibid.

the culprit for unlikely, at least according to the existing literature, candidates emerging from their primaries.

My hypothesis is that candidates who have backgrounds in voters' key issues will highlight those issues in which they can legitimately claim ownership over. If I am correct, these candidates will then see a positive bump in the polls. The analysis will be broken down weekly, since campaigns are such high-speed events.

METHODS

For the 2016 election, I analyzed the first two debates looking for instance's candidates made claims on key issues. Using a Gallup poll from January 2016, right before the Iowa Caucuses, I found the issues that were most important to voters. The issues are as follows: bipartisan issues are terrorism and national security, the economy, employment and jobs, healthcare and the Affordable Care Act aka Obamacare. Issues for Democrats: education and distribution of wealth; and for Republicans: the budget deficit, foreign affairs, size and efficiency of federal government, immigration, and taxes.³⁵

Due to the size of the Republican Presidential primary in 2016, I decided to put a cap on which candidates, from either party, were tracked. The candidates had to be at or above 6% nationally prior to the first debate and stay in the race until at least Super Tuesday. CBS conducted a poll that came out on August 2nd, 2015 that showed Donald Trump at 24%, Jeb Bush at 13%, Mike Huckabee 8%, and Ted Cruz, Marco Rubio and

³⁵ Newport, Frank. "Democrats, Republicans Agree on Four Top Issues for Campaign." Gallup.com. Gallup, February, 1st, 2016.

Dr. Ben Carson at 6%, just four days before the first GOP debate on August 6th, 2015.³⁶

The first Democratic debate took place a few months later on October 13th, 2015.

Candidates were tracked up until they dropped out or until the nominee clinched the nomination. According to Real Clear Politics, Hillary Clinton had a 41.6% to 25.2% lead over Bernie Sanders on October 9th, 2015, just four days before their first debate, with no other candidates above 6%.³⁷

Keeping tally of the claims staked out by the candidates was rather simple. The first two debates for both parties was used as this is the first time most candidates have an opportunity to nationally introduce themselves to voters. I recorded when candidates mentioned their background experiences that directly addressed a key topic from the Gallup poll. For example, Senator Ted Cruz stating that he had never supported amnesty for illegal immigrants, thereby making a claim on the topic of immigration,³⁸ or Senator Sanders saying that he voted against the government bailout of Wall Street in 2008 to make a claim on the issue of the economy.³⁹ It is expected that candidates will make claims on more than one issue and that each issue will have more than one candidate attempting to capture it.

The difficulty comes with non-politician candidates such as Trump or Carson. Trump made more claims on issues generally speaking from his business background. His background allowed him to make a claim on issues like the economy, jobs and

³⁶ Dutton, Sarah, Jennifer De Pinto, Anthony Salvanto, and Fred Backus. "CBS News Poll: Donald Trump Leads GOP Field in 2016 Presidential Race." CBS News. CBS Interactive, August 4, 2015.

³⁷ "Election 2016 - 2016 Democratic Presidential Nomination." RealClearPolitics.

³⁸ Republican Debate.

³⁹ Full Transcript: Democratic.

foreign policy since he “get[s] along with people.”⁴⁰ Carson on the other hand does not speak with a position of authority on these issues, and thus does not have many claims.

A problem with this preliminary coding tactic is that it does not sufficiently capture the magnitude of certain backgrounds. For example, in the debates, Secretary Clinton made nine references to her background in terrorism, national security and foreign policy, and Sen. Sanders made seven. However, since Clinton was the Secretary of State under President Barack Obama, she likely has more ownership over the issue than Sanders. Yet, there was not a way to code these fairly.

Next, I analyzed if the candidates are emphasizing the issues that they claim to own. For this section I used Twitter as a source for how candidates were marketing themselves to voters. Twitter is used to discuss the extent to which candidates are talking about issues because they are essentially 140-character press releases that are easily accessible to voters. If candidates tweeted about issues they own, they should be rewarded with a jump in the polls. In John Tedesco’s 2001 piece about agenda setting in the 2000 Presidential primary, he uses the content in press releases to provide a better picture of candidate-media issue agendas.⁴¹ However, this paper is simply focused on what the candidate themselves are messaging to voters and the press releases Tedesco used are now more easily accessible through social media.

⁴⁰ Beckwith, Ryan Teague. “Republican Debate: Read the Transcript of the Second Debate.” Time. Time, September 18, 2015.

⁴¹ Tedesco, John C. “Issue and Strategy Agenda-Setting in the 2000 Presidential Primaries.” *American Behavioral Scientist* 44, no. 12 (2001): 2048-067.

The polls and the rate to which a candidate mentions a certain issue on Twitter is split up weekly, to see longitudinally if more or less candidates emphasize an issue if it fluctuates their poll numbers. Primaries are complicated events with multiple agendas and many candidates; which does not allow for a single snapshot in time to be sufficient to analyze the whole process. Graphs will be provided for each candidate containing the amount to which they talked about the issues they made claims on and their poll numbers.

Trump, Rubio, Cruz, Carson and Clinton's tweets have all been stored in a database known as the Trump Twitter Archive;⁴² for Sanders, I manually tallied and coded the tweets. From this database, I searched key words and phrases associated with what issues the candidates claimed ownership on in the first two debates. The time period used is a few days before the first debate essentially until the primary campaigns stopped. Some topics are less likely to be mentioned explicitly, such as foreign policy, whereas roundabout topics act as a proxy; particularly Iran,⁴³ specifically the nuclear arms deal negotiated by President Obama, and Israel,⁴⁴ being America's most important ally in the Middle East, were salient topics of the 2016 primary campaign.

Topics were tracked weekly, from the beginning of the week of the first primary debate for either party. Thus, each candidates' Twitter feed was monitored weekly using terms discussed in the next paragraph. For the GOP primary, Week 1 correlates with August 2nd, 2015 through August 9th, 2015 as the first debate was on August 6th. Week 5

⁴² "Trump Twitter Archive." Trump Twitter Archive.

⁴³ "2016 Presidential Candidates on the Iran Nuclear Deal." Ballotpedia.

⁴⁴ Landler, Mark, and Maggie Haberman. "Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump Vow to Protect Israel but Differ on Means." The New York Times. The New York Times, March 22, 2016.

is August 31st, 2015 through September 9th, 2015, and so on. Week 40 is the final week for the 2016 Republican Primary, since Cruz, Trump's final opponent, dropped out on May 3rd, 2016.⁴⁵ On the Democratic side, Week 1 corresponds to October 5th, 2015 through October 11th, 2015 since the first Democratic debate was on October 13th, 2015. The last week is Week 35, which is May 30th, 2016 through June 7th, 2016 as that was the last week that primary or caucus elections were held, and thus polling stopped. Sen. Sanders did not drop out until July 11th, 2016.⁴⁶ The analysis for Carson and Rubio ends when their campaigns did, on March 4th, 2016⁴⁷ and March 16th, 2016 respectively.⁴⁸

Many of the topics allowed for specific policies to be brought up, such as linking education with Common Core and students. The following terms were used as an umbrella topic with several subtopics within them: jobs was linked with employment; the economy was joined together with business and finance; taxes was an individual topic; immigration was combined with "immigrants", "wall", "border", and "illegals"; foreign policy was a solo topic as were Iran and Israel; terrorism was linked with national security; healthcare was connected with Obamacare and the Affordable Care Act (ACA); education with Common Core and students; distribution of wealth; and the budget was linked with debt and the deficit. I decided which terms linked together simply by association, such as healthcare and Obamacare, whereas others are interpreted to be

⁴⁵ Martin, Jonathan, and Patrick Healy. "Donald Trump All but Clinches G.O.P. Race With Indiana Win; Ted Cruz Quits." The New York Times. The New York Times, May 3, 2016.

⁴⁶ Lee, MJ, Dan Merica, and Jeff Zeleny. "Bernie Sanders Endorses Hillary Clinton." CNN. Cable News Network, July 12, 2016.

⁴⁷ Jacobs, Ben. "Ben Carson Drops out of Presidential Race: 'I'm Leaving the Campaign Trail'." The Guardian. Guardian News and Media, March 4, 2016.

⁴⁸ Kopan, Tal. "Marco Rubio Drops out of Presidential Campaign after Florida Loss." CNN. Cable News Network, March 16, 2016.

significant on their own, such as Iran or Israel. The categories could have been split up so each synonym could have its own category, but through my research I learned that candidates often prefer some terms over others even when discussing the same issue. For example, rarely did Republicans refer to the issue of healthcare as the Affordable Care Act or even healthcare, but instead called it “Obamacare,” likely as a partisan cue. It is unlikely that a further breakdown of the issues would have changed the results.

Each of the candidates have five graphs: one for all of their issue-related tweets, which was quite convoluted so they were divided into two other graphs, foreign and domestic issues. Next, total issue-related tweets are next to their poll numbers over the same period, and lastly their issue-owned tweets and poll numbers. The figures for the candidates are listed over the next few pages, each candidate having a dedicated page. Candidates will also have a table breaking down the average tweets about each issue per week, as well as their average number of tweets over issues that they claimed and the total number of times they tweeted about an issue.

The best way to measure these candidates is by comparing them to each other since they are running for the same nomination. First, I calculated the total issue-owned tweets for each party by adding up the totals that each candidate tweeted and calculated a percentage for each candidate each week; this is referred to as the Weekly Percentage. Next, I created a rolling percentage of the total issue-owned tweets per week by party to compare candidates, since voters are likely looking at multiple candidates. Thus, the hypothesis evolves to when candidates own more of the total percentage of tweets, their

poll numbers should go up. Those graphs and tables are listed in the pages following each candidates' breakdown.

Table 1: Trump Breakdown⁴⁹

Issue	Jobs	Economy	Taxes	Immigration	Foreign Policy	Iran	Israel
Mean	1.05	0.8	0.475	2.325	0.175	0.575	0.2
Median	1	1	0	2	0	0	0
Total	42	32	19	93	7	23	8

Issue	Terrorism	Healthcare	Education	Wealth	Budget	Weekly Totals Average	Claimed Issue Average
Mean	0.8	0.55	0.45	0.025	0.2	7.625	5.475
Median	0	0	0	0	0	7	5
Total	32	22	18	1	8	305	219

Table 2: Cruz Breakdown⁵⁰

Issue	Jobs	Economy	Taxes	Immigration	Foreign Policy	Iran	Israel
Mean	1.25	0.6	1.85	1.725	0.225	2.05	0.95
Median	0	0	1	1	0	1	0

⁴⁹ Trump.

⁵⁰ "Trump Twitter Archive." Trump Twitter Archive: Ted Cruz.

Total	50	24	74	69	9	82	38
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Issue	Terrorism	Healthcare	Education	Wealth	Budget	Weekly Totals Average	Claimed Issue Average
Mean	2.5	1.05	0.4	0.025	0.1	12.725	6.5
Median	1.5	1	0	0	0	10	5
Total	100	42	16	1	4	509	260

Table 3: Rubio Breakdown⁵¹

Issue	Jobs	Economy	Taxes	Immigration	Foreign Policy	Iran	Israel
Mean	0.212	0.636	0.789	0.242	0.606	0.848	0.545
Median	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	7	21	26	8	20	28	18

Issue	Terrorism	Healthcare	Education	Wealth	Budget	Weekly Totals Average	Claimed Issue Average
Mean	0.909	0.606	0.697	0	0.152	6.121	3.272
Median	0	0	0	0	0	6	2
Total	30	20	23	0	5	202	108

⁵¹ “Trump Twitter Archive.” Trump Twitter Archive: Marco Rubio.

Table 4: Carson Breakdown⁵²

Issue	Jobs	Economy	Taxes	Immigration	Foreign Policy	Iran	Israel
Mean	0.097	0.387	1.258	1.065	0.258	0.161	0.032
Median	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	3	12	39	33	8	5	1

Issue	Terrorism	Healthcare	Education	Wealth	Budget	Weekly Totals Average	Claimed Issue Average
Mean	1.194	0.581	2.29	0.548	0.097	7.968	0.581
Median	0	0	2	0	0	5	0
Total	37	18	71	17	3	247	18

Table 5: Clinton Breakdown⁵³

Issue	Jobs	Economy	Taxes	Immigration	Foreign Policy	Iran	Israel
Mean	0.714	1.942	0.857	1.657	0.543	0.171	0
Median	0	2	0	1	0	0	0
Total	25	68	30	58	19	6	0

⁵² “Trump Twitter Archive.” Trump Twitter Archive: Ben Carson.

⁵³ “Trump Twitter Archive.” Trump Twitter Archive: Hillary Clinton.

Issue	Terrorism	Healthcare	Education	Wealth	Budget	Weekly Totals Average	Claimed Issue Average
Mean	0.943	2.514	1.629	0.686	0	11.657	6.657
Median	0	2	1	0	0	12	7
Total	33	88	57	24	0	408	233

Table 6: Sanders Breakdown⁵⁴

Issue	Jobs	Economy	Taxes	Immigration	Foreign Policy	Iran	Israel
Mean	0.886	0.914	0.543	0.457	0.029	0.029	0
Median	1	.9143	0.543	0	0	0	0
Total	31	32	19	16	1	1	0

Issue	Terrorism	Healthcare	Education	Wealth	Budget	Weekly Totals Average	Claimed Issue Average
Mean	0.029	1.771	1.743	1.971	0.057	8.429	6.571
Median	0	2	1	2	0	8	7
Total	1	62	61	69	2	295	230

⁵⁴ Sanders, Bernie. "Bernie Sanders (@BernieSanders)." Twitter.

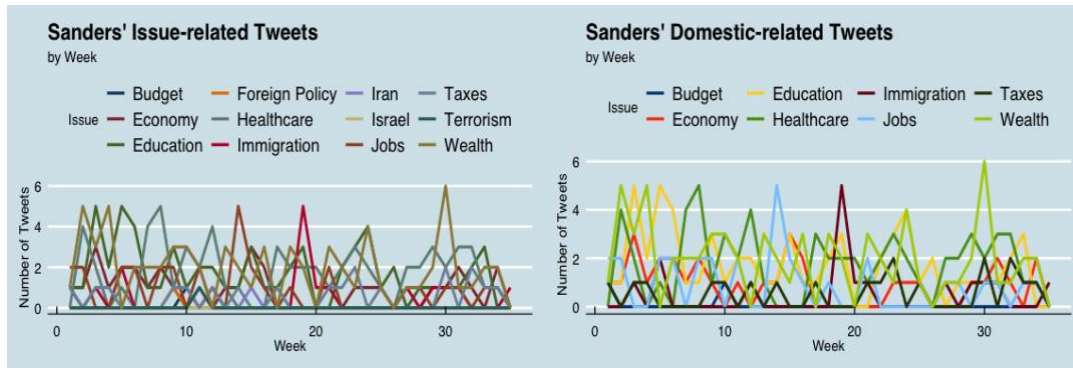


Figure 2

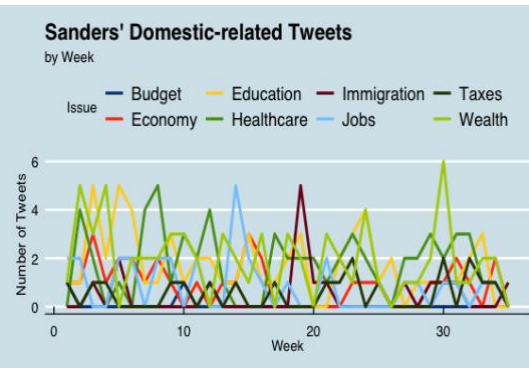


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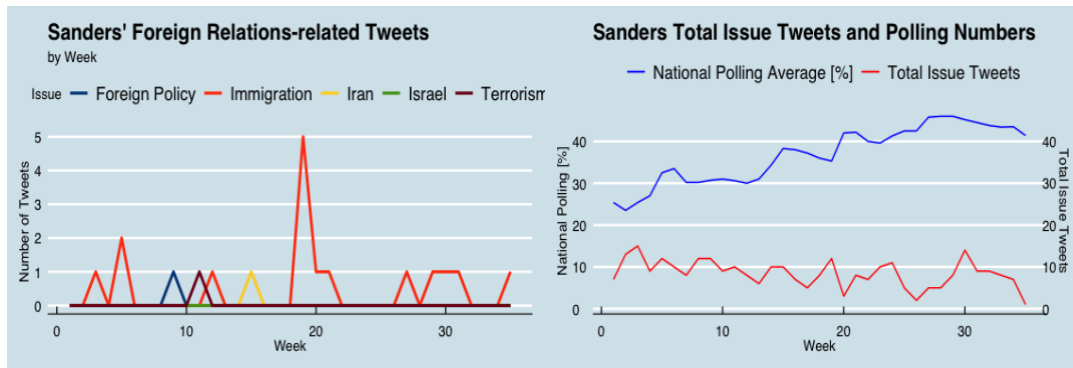


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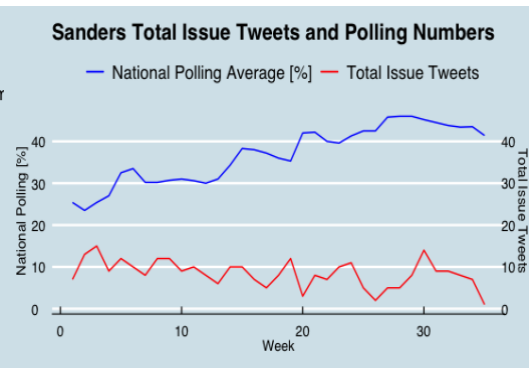


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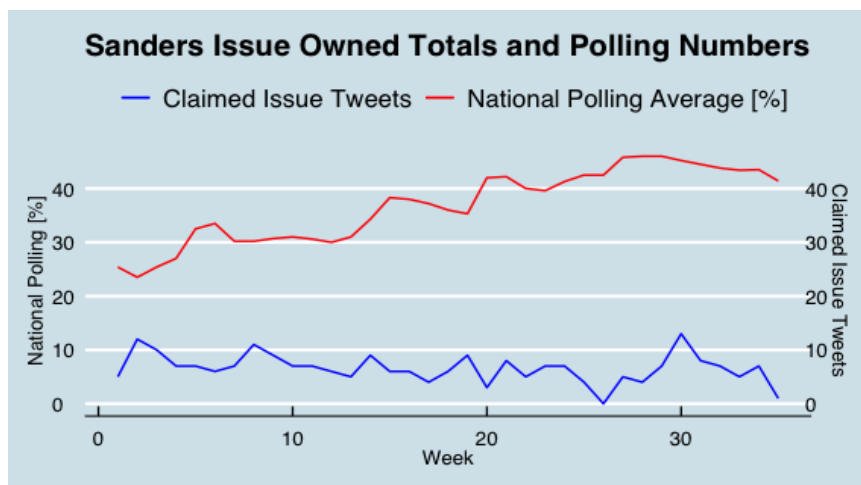


Figure 6

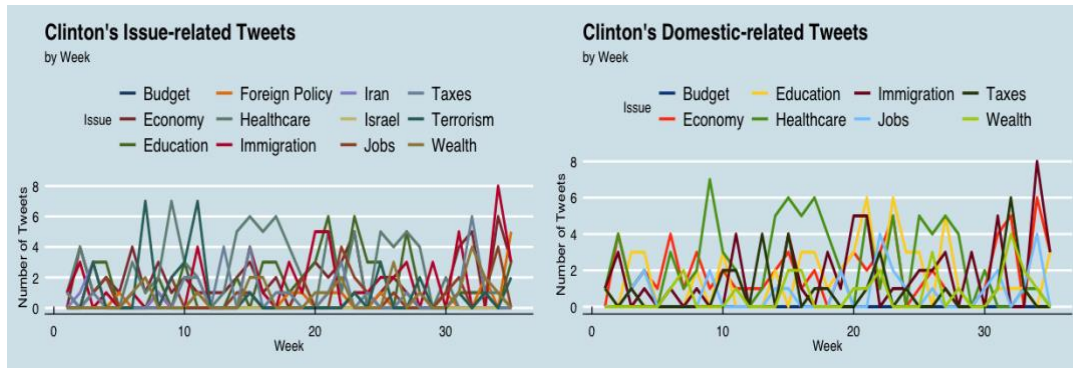


Figure 7

Figure 8

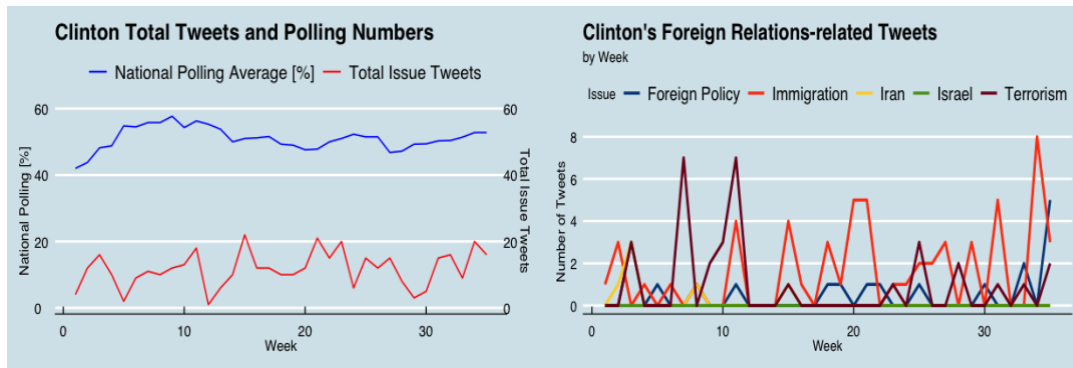


Figure 9

Figure 10

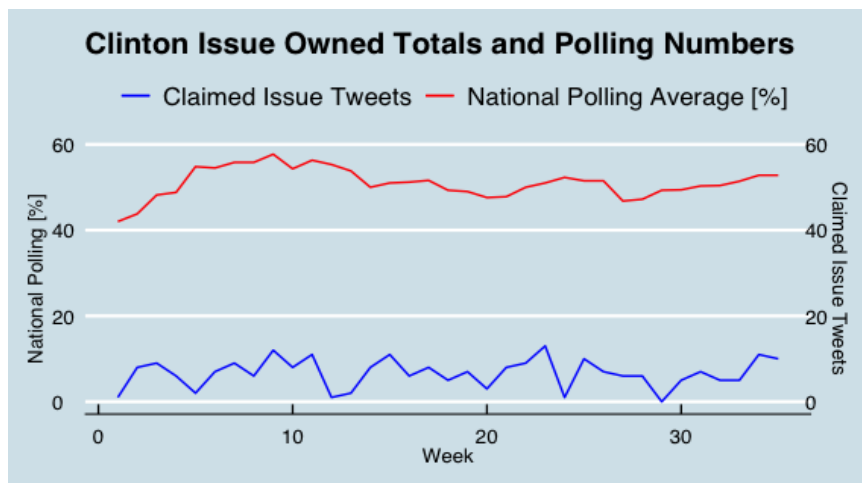


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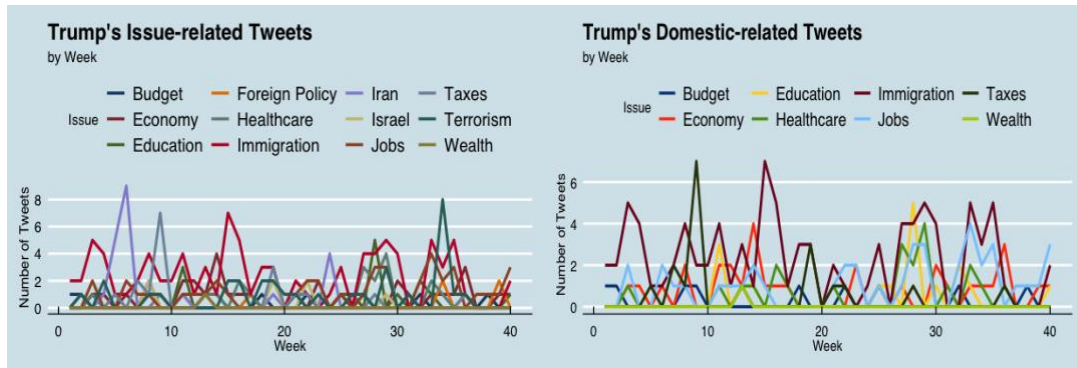


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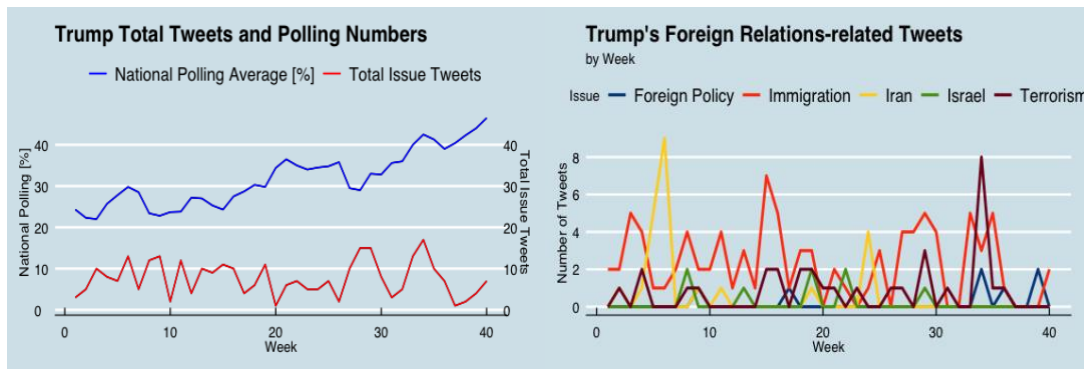


Figure 14

Figure 15

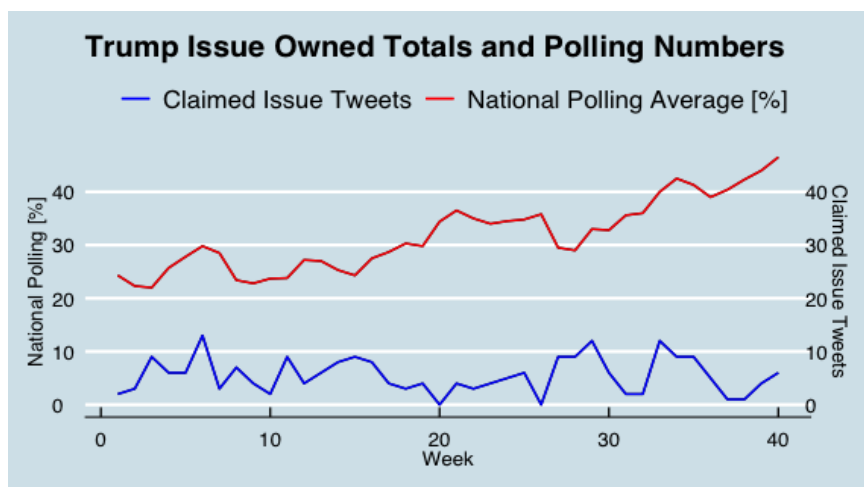
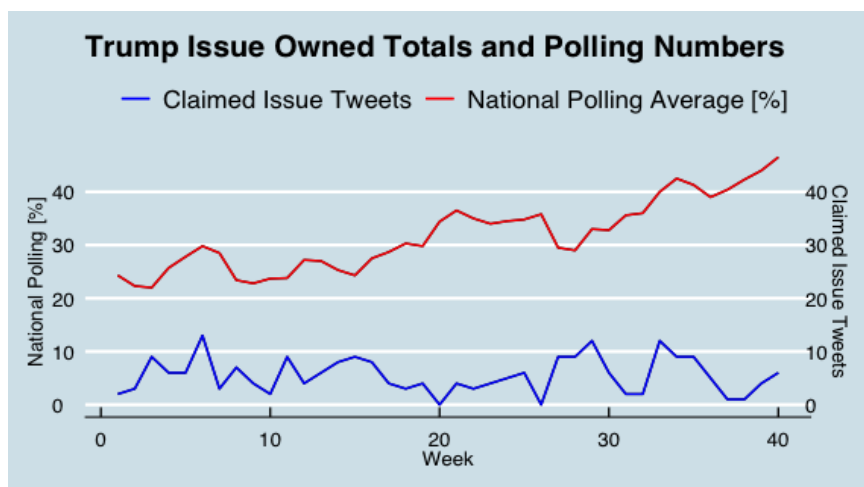


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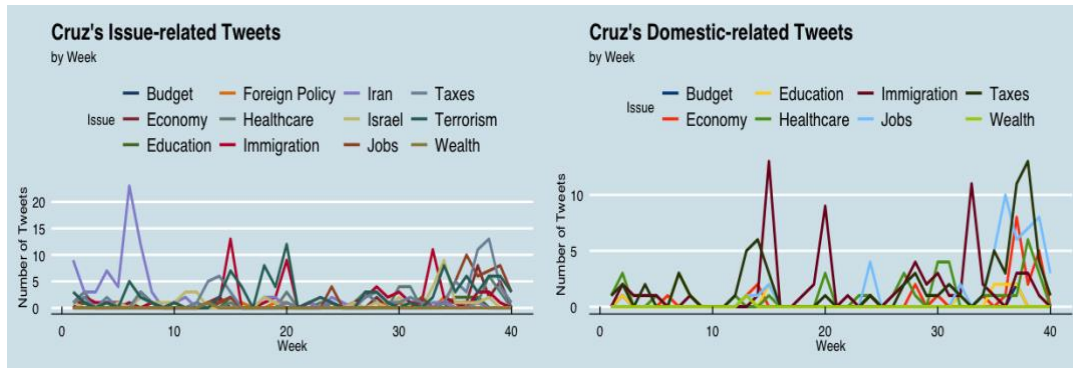


Figure 17

Figure 18

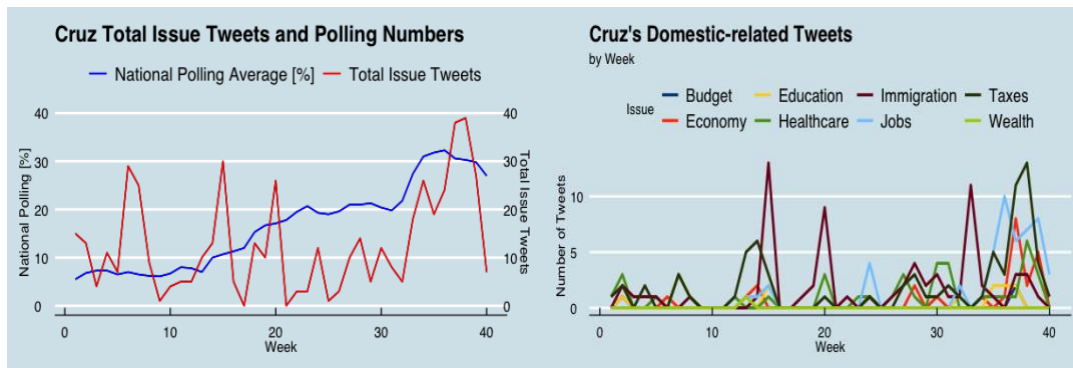


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Figure 20

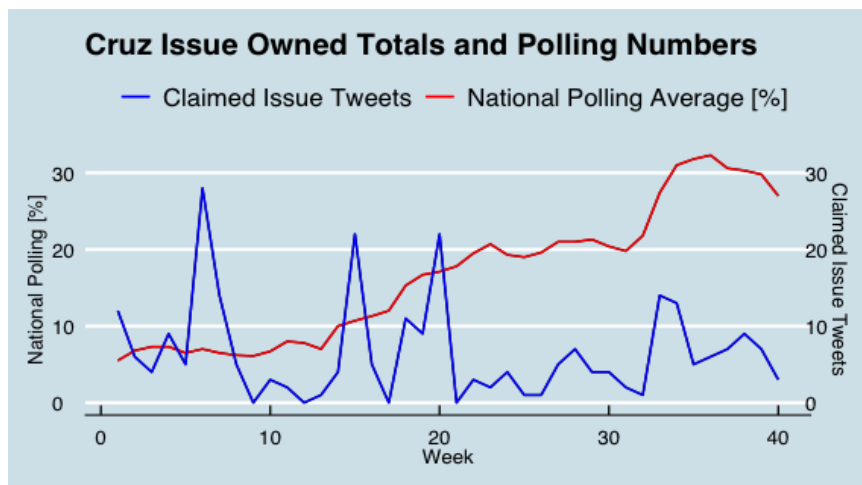


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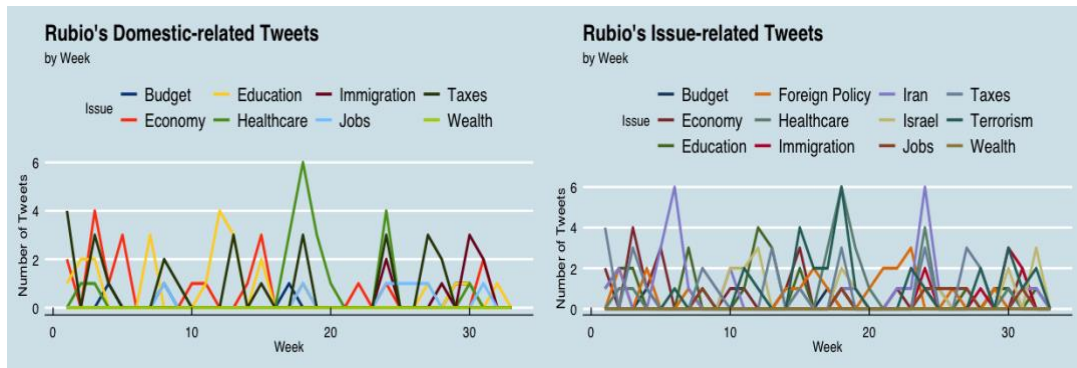


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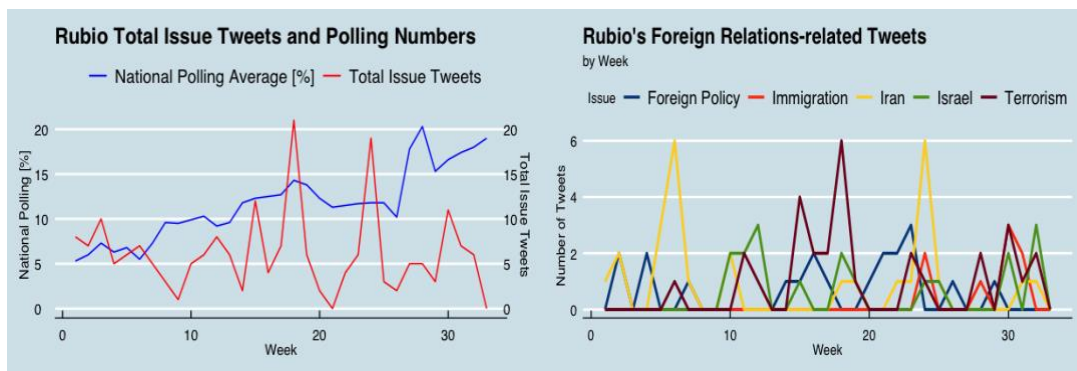


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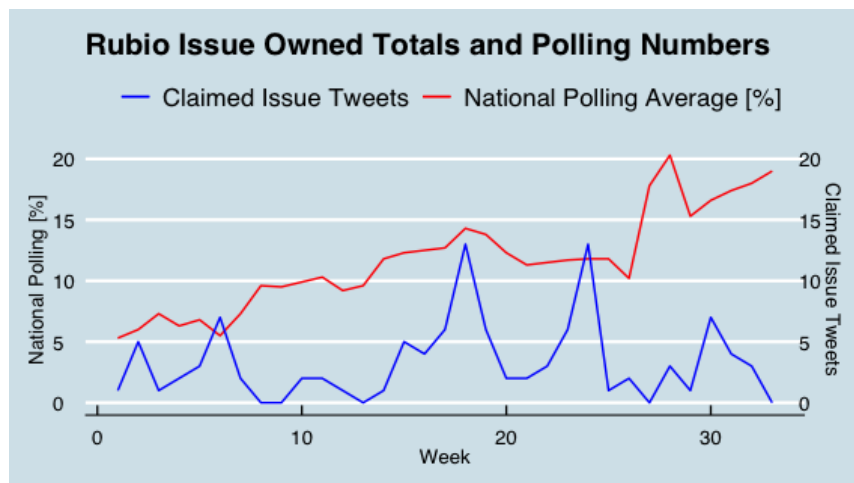


Figure 26

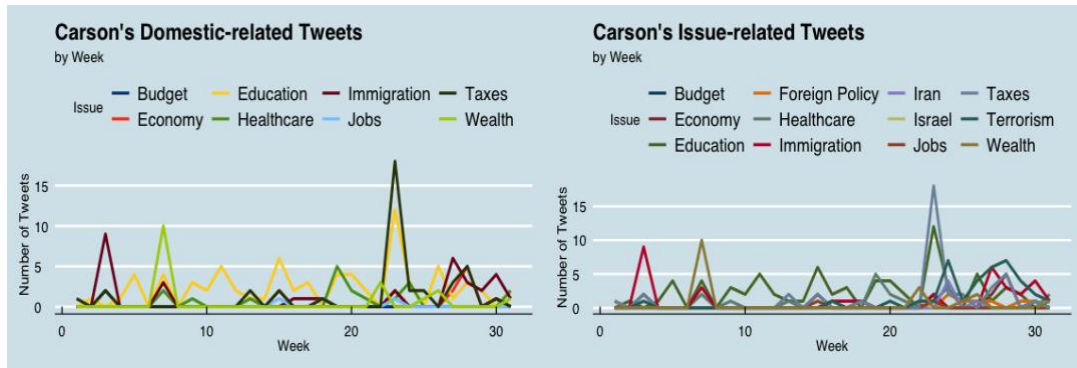


Figure 27

Figure 28

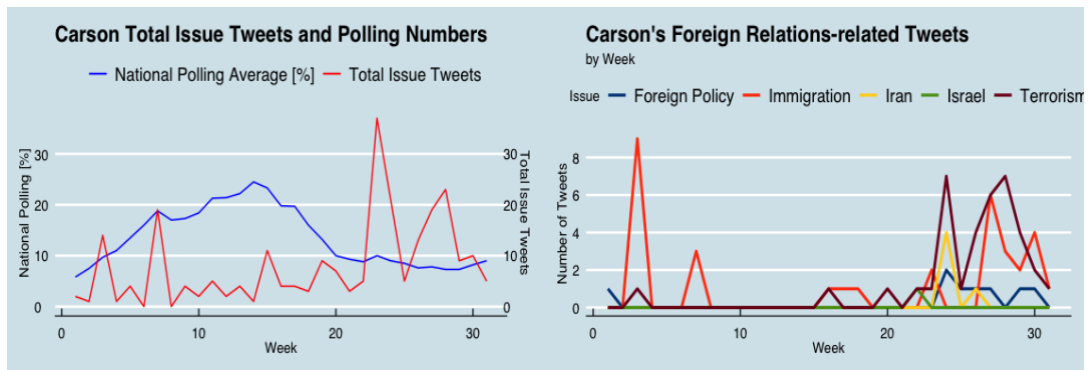


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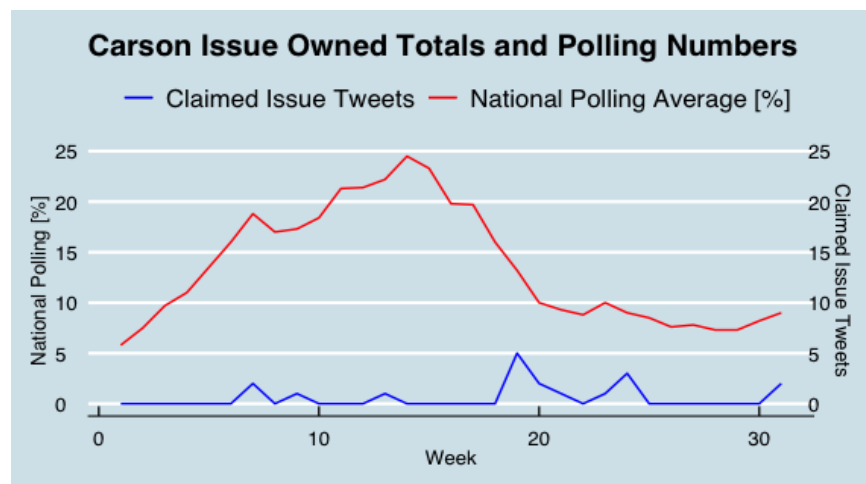


Figure 31

RESULTS

In the debates, Trump made claims on the following issues: jobs, the economy, taxes, immigration, foreign policy, and health care.⁵⁵⁵⁶⁵⁷ He connected these topics to his background in business. Next, Rubio made claims on immigration, foreign policy, national security and the ACA. Ted Cruz laid claim on immigration, national security, foreign policy, Iran and terrorism. Also, in the database is Ben Carson. The difficulty with analyzing Carson is that he has no history of public service, and unlike Trump, does not make any claims that being outside of office helps him with any key issues. He did, however, make claims on health care since he was a successful pediatric surgeon.⁵⁸ This may be an advantage for the analysis because it can show how voters may be turned off by a candidate who does not speak from a position of strength on any key issues. The national polling for the GOP side is listed in figure 32.

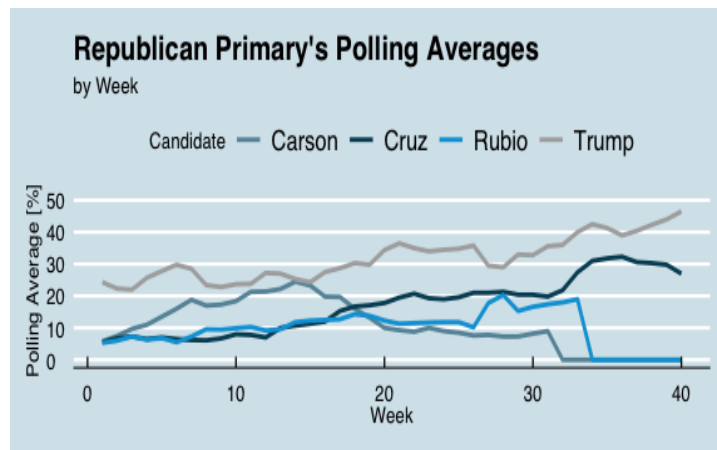


Figure 32

Moving to the Democratic side,

Hillary Clinton who made claims on health care, foreign policy, national security and

⁵⁵ Republican Debate.

⁵⁶ Beckwith.

⁵⁷ In this section, the GOP debates are cited, and came from the Republican Debate and Beckwith.

⁵⁸ "Secretary Ben Carson." HUD.gov / U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

terrorism, jobs and the economy.⁵⁹⁶⁰ Sanders made claims in the debate on jobs, the economy, taxes, immigration, foreign policy, healthcare and distribution of wealth. The national polling for the Democratic primary is listed below in Figure 33.

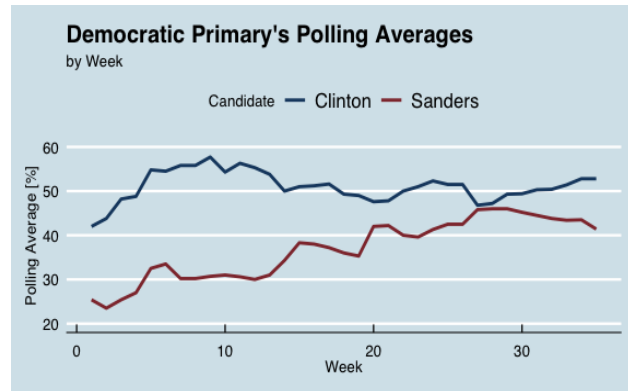


Figure 33

A key part of the analysis is the natural experiment that occurs on the GOP side. On August 2nd, 2015, Trump was at 24% while the three other GOP candidates were all at 6%.⁶¹ The benefits of having Carson, Rubio and Cruz all at the same starting percentage cannot be understated. This allows each of the candidates to be measured across time to see how much they really shift. The table, and history shows, the voters trusted Cruz and how he was able to use this momentum to win the Iowa caucus.⁶²

⁵⁹ Full Transcript.

⁶⁰ Beckwith, Ryan Teague. "Transcript: Read the Full Text of the Second Democratic Debate." Time. Time, November 16, 2015.

⁶¹ Dutton.

⁶² Glueck, Katie, Eli Stokols, Gabriel Debenedetti, and Nick Gass. "How Cruz Beat Trump." POLITICO, February 2, 2016.

Carson is the most interesting example of the bunch. At one point, he was virtually tied with Trump at the top of the Republican primary, before seeing a collapse in his poll numbers in November. A few key takeaways from the Carson experience: first, political outsiders were a hot commodity in the 2016 primary, since neither Trump nor Carson had ever held elected office; and secondly, voters clearly did not trust Carson

on the issues once the primary got closer. His collapse came a few months before the first vote, even though he mentioned key issues the most on his twitter page.

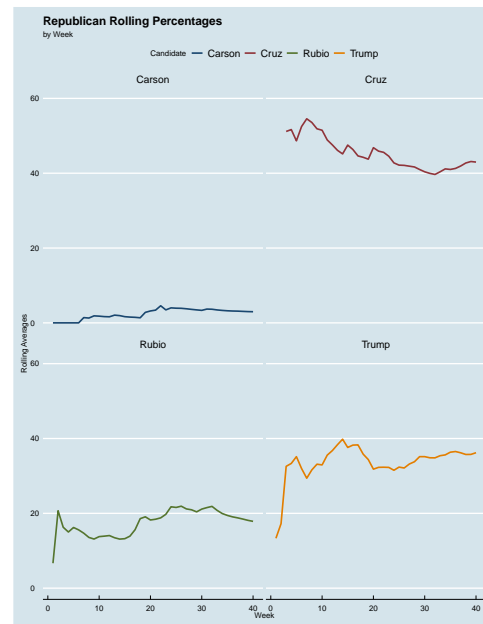


Figure 34

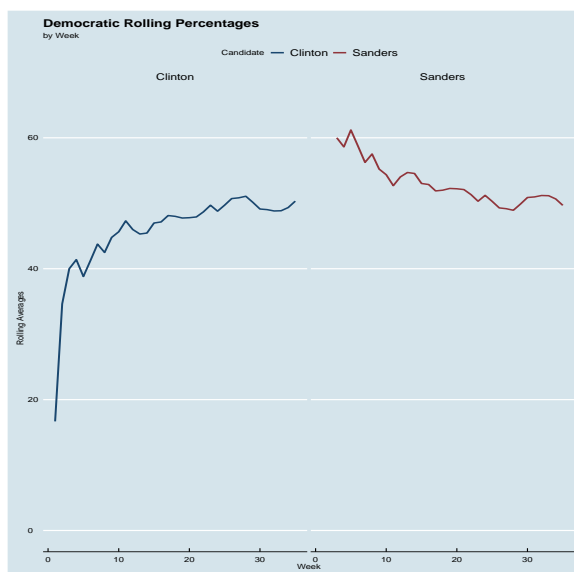


Figure 35

Figure 34 graphs out the rolling percentage for each of the candidates on the GOP side and Figure 35 shows the results for the Democratic side.

After the initial results were totaled, I then relied on a candidate's fixed effects model to carry out my regression. I decided to use this model because it is typically used with panel or longitudinal data, such as this data. This required me to condense

the data into long format, where each week has two, for two Democratic candidates, or four, observations for the GOP side. In this data I included the weekly polling for each candidate, their rolling percentage, their weekly claimed totals, their weekly percentage of total claimed tweets in their party, if there was an election, and lastly if the candidate was still running, called “Exit”. With the election variable, perhaps candidates will receive a bigger boost in the polls during weeks that elections take place. The exit variable will be negatively correlated since Rubio and Carson, the only candidates who will receive a ‘1’ since they dropped out, obviously both had their polling numbers plummet once they left the race.

The dependent variable, the polling numbers, was regressed with the independent variable, the calculated rolling percentage for each of the candidates. I included three dummy variables, the first one asking if there were any primaries or caucuses that week,⁶³ being a binary 0

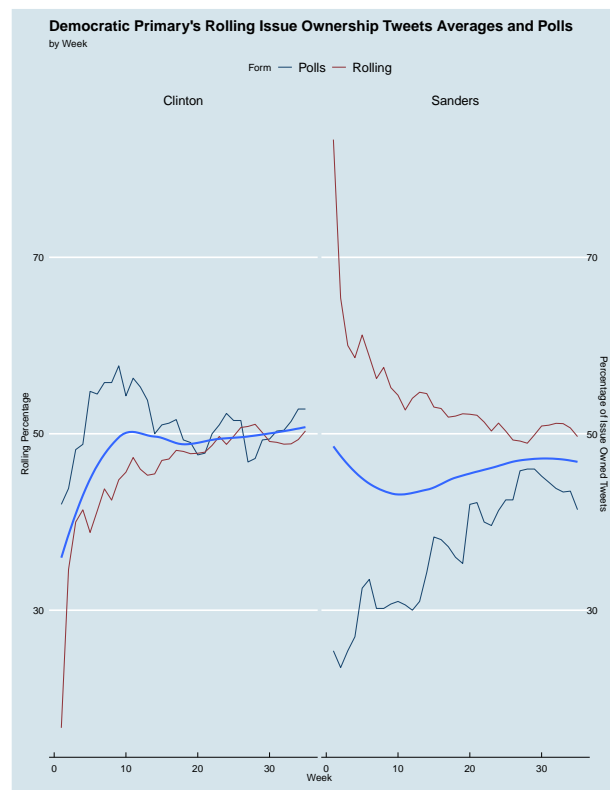


Figure 36

for no election or 1 for yes at least one election took place; the second being the

⁶³ Attempting to objectively apply a magnitude to the impact of a single primary or caucus is impossible. It is also not true that all elections weigh the same in terms of importance in the mind of the public, media or the candidates themselves.

candidates themselves; and lastly if the candidate had exited the race. The rolling percentage is more favorable than using the weekly percentage for the model because the rolling incorporates the fact that the events from previous weeks have an impact on polls. The weekly percentage is too isolated since campaigns do not happen in a vacuum, but instead are events that are an overall summation of the race thus far.

In the R code, I used the “lag” function on the rolling percentage of tweets, as well as the election variable, to reflect my hypothesis that the tweets from a candidate should reflect in the polling numbers one week later.⁶⁴ If the lag function is not used, the effect would be instantaneous between tweets and polls, which is not the case. Likely, voters would need a week to digest last weeks’ happenings.

The results from the test for the Democratic primary are listed in Table 7. The dummy variable “Exit” is not reported for this contest because there were only two candidates, and the analysis ends when Clinton secures the nomination. As reported in the table, as the rolling percentage increases by 1 percentage point, we can expect the candidates’ polling numbers decrease by 0.256%, and this result is statistically significant as shown by the T value being below -1.96 and the P value being below 0.05. The r-squared value indicates that about 99.32% of the variation in the polling numbers can be attributed to the independent variables in the model. The adjusted r-squared, which is less than the initial R-squared, indicates that one of the independent variables in the model decreases the predictability of the model. Also, in Figure 36 is the polling percentage and

⁶⁴ The R Code, in which each candidate and party contest have their own code and all of the data are in a zip file in the Appendix.

rolling percentage with a line of best fit broken down by candidate. For the results for Clinton and Sanders individually, please consult the appendix. Both candidates had a significant P value for the rolling percentage, though Clinton's rolling coefficient was positive and Sanders' was negative.

Table 7: Democratic Results

Variable	Estimate	Standard Error	T Value	P Value	R-Squared	Adjusted R-Squared
Rolling Percentage	-0.253	0.075	-4.724	1.34e-05*** ⁶⁵	0.9932	0.9927
Clinton	62.387	3.593	17.364	< 2e-16***		
Sanders	51.376	4.215	12.187	< 2e-16***		
Election	-0.282	1.272	-0.221	0.825		
Week	0.276	0.064	4.325	5.54e-05		

⁶⁵ Significance codes: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1

The results from the test for the Republican primary are listed in Table 8. As reported in the table, as the rolling percentage increases by 1 percentage point, we can expect the candidates' polling numbers decrease by 0.247 %, and this result is statistically

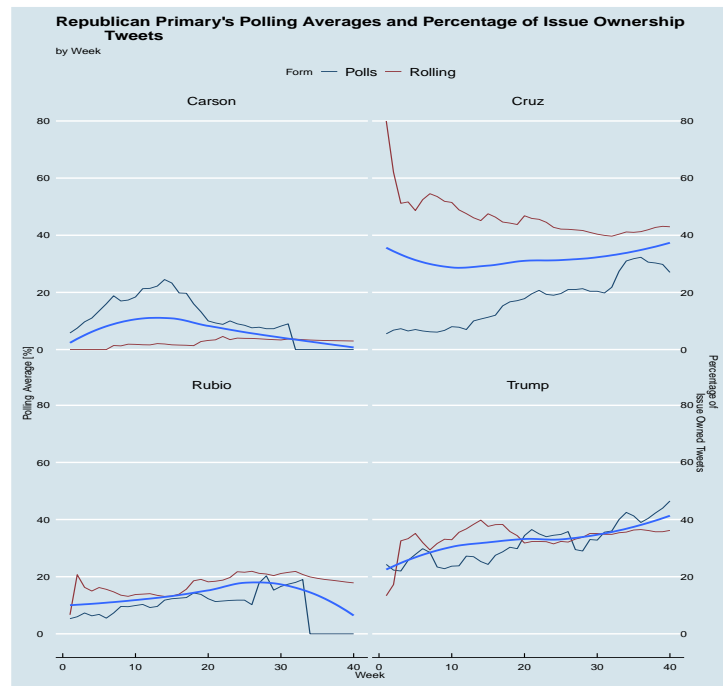


Figure 37

significant as shown by the T value being below -1.96 and the P value being below 0.05. The r-squared value indicates that about 95.7% of the variation in the polling numbers can be attributed to the independent variables in the model. The adjusted r-squared, which is less than the initial R-squared, indicates that one of the independent variables in the model decreases the predictability of the model. Figure 37 also breaks down each of the candidates' polling numbers and their rolling percentage with a line of best fit. The results are listed in the appendix for individual candidates, though the results are not as statistically significant as they were for the Republican side.

Table 8: Republican Results

Variable	Estimate	Standard Error	T Value	P Value	R-Squared	Adjusted R-Squared

Rolling ⁶⁶	-0.247	0.075	-3.296	0.00123** ⁶⁷	0.957	0.9549
Carson	7.282	1.031	7.063	5.90e-11***		
Cruz	19.957	3.689	5.410	2.48e-07***		
Rubio	9.074	1.667	5.443	2.12e-07***		
Trump	31.502	2.767	11.384	< 2e-16***		
Election	0.939	1.090	0.861	0.390		
Exit	-21.004	1.448	-14.506	< 2e-16***		
Week	0.405	0.044	9.117	5.12e-16***		

Putting these results into context has a key takeaway: that the literature around primaries and elections that shows that issues do not matter as much as the candidates themselves, seems to be proven true by the negative coefficients generated when comparing polling numbers and issue ownership. The results for individual candidates and using the fixed effects model with the weekly percentage is listed in the appendix.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

These results call into question the validity of the issue ownership hypothesis and its impact on primary campaigns. The results suggest that as candidates discuss more of the issues that voters care about, their polling numbers drop. This may suggest, as other literature does, that primary campaigns have more to do with the personality of each candidate, rather than the issues they are running on. That being said, some of the results are positive and statistically significant for some candidates, which perhaps suggest that

⁶⁶ Rolling refers to the rolling percentage that was calculated on a weekly basis.

⁶⁷ Significance codes: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1

issue ownership was a successful strategy for some candidates, but only when they are isolated. Please consult the tables in the appendix.

2016 was a truly unique election year with the rise of Sanders and Trump as radicals who were able to galvanize typically apathetic voters. Perhaps the 2020 election or previous elections beyond the scope of this paper would find positive and significant results, which further research should look into. Future researchers may want to look into more consensus issues within the party, such as abortion, gun rights, or other issues that the general public may not find particularly salient, but primary voters will. Another unexplored possibility is that candidates can speak from positions of authority on issues they do not claim to own, and receive polling bumps that way. The question is: if candidates speak from a position of authority on some issues, does their expertise carry over to other issues they do not claim to own? Voters may still trust them because of their expertise in other areas. The scope of this paper is limited only to issue ownership, but it would be a natural extension to follow.

APPENDIX

Table 9: GOP Weekly

Variable	Estimate	Standard Error	T Value	P Value	R-Squared	Adjusted R-Squared
Weekly ⁶⁸	-0.0028	0.019	-0.143	0.887	0.954	0.9516
Carson	6.702	1.054	6.361	2.36e-09*** ⁶⁹		
Cruz	8.417	1.290	6.524	1.02e-9***		
Rubio	4.775	1.113	4.291	3.20e-05***		
Trump	23.192	1.311	17.688	< 2e-16***		
Election	0.998	1.130	0.884	0.378		
Exit	-21.580	1.519	-14.206	< 2e-16***		
Week	0.411	0.046	8.910	1.73e-15***		

Table 10: Trump Rolling Percentage

Variable	Estimate	Standard Error	T Value	P Value	R-Squared	Adjusted R-Squared
Intercept	22.146	3.505	6.319	2.94e-07***	0.8066	0.7901
Rolling	-0.043	0.114	-0.377	0.708		
Election	-0.045	1.521	0.030	0.976		
Week	0.537	0.064	8.365	7.26e-10***		
Exit	NA	NA	NA	NA		

⁶⁸ Rolling refers to the weekly percentage of issue owned tweets by candidates.

⁶⁹ Significance codes: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1

Table 11: Trump Weekly

Variable	Estimate	Standard Error	T Value	P Value	R-Squared	Adjusted R-Squared
Intercept	22.314	1.462	15.266	<2e-16***	0.8171	0.8014
Weekly	-0.031	0.021	-1.465	0.152		
Election	0.218	1.468	0.148	0.883		
Week	0.516	0.057	9.024	1.16e-10***		
Exit	NA	NA	NA	NA		

Table 12: Cruz Rolling

Variable	Estimate	Standard Error	T Value	P Value	R-Squared	Adjusted R-Squared
Intercept	-5.812	4.765	-1.220	0.231	0.9294	0.9233
Rolling	0.134	0.081	1.652	0.107		
Election	-0.579	1.176	-0.493	0.625		
Week	0.805	0.063	12.687	1.19e-14***		
Exit	NA	NA	NA	NA		

Table 13: Cruz Weekly

Variable	Estimate	Standard Error	T Value	P Value	R-Squared	Adjusted R-Squared
Intercept	1.215	1.033	1.176	0.248	0.9275	0.9213

Weekly	0.021	0.016	1.322	0.195		
Election	-0.413	1.182	-0.349	0.729		
Week	0.516	0.057	9.024	<2e-16***		
Exit	NA	NA	NA	NA		

Table 14: Rubio Rolling

Variable	Estimate	Standard Error	T Value	P Value	R-Squared	Adjusted R-Squared
Intercept	7.506	1.548	4.848	2.71e-05***	0.9289	0.9205
Rolling	-0.133	0.11564	-1.152	0.2753		
Election	1.791	0.810	2.212	1.15e-08***		
Week	0.363	0.049	7.470	1.15e-08***		
Exit	-19.67237	1.014	-19.400	< 2e-16***		

Table 15: Rubio Weekly

Variable	Estimate	Standard Error	T Value	P Value	R-Squared	Adjusted R-Squared
Intercept	5.830	0.674	8.653	4.13e-10***	0.9265	0.9179
Weekly	0.008	0.018	0.461	0.648		
Election	1.752	0.826	2.121	0.041*		
Week	0.318	0.041	7.774	4.80e-09***		
Exit	-18.861	1.163	-16.212	< 2e-16***		

Table 16: Carson Rolling

Variable	Estimate	Standard Error	T Value	P Value	R-Squared	Adjusted R-Squared
Intercept	18.356	1.847	9.937	1.37e-11***	0.6853	0.6482
Rolling	-0.133	0.11564	-1.152	0.2753		
Election	-1.927	2.376	-0.811	0.423		
Week	-0.189	0.210	-0.898	0.3753		
Exit	-8.067	3.340	-2.415	0.021*		

Table 17: Carson Weekly

Variable	Estimate	Standard Error	T Value	P Value	R-Squared	Adjusted R-Squared
Intercept	18.582	1.855	10.018	1.11e-11***	0.6835	0.6463
Weekly	-0.021	0.117	-0.179	0.859		
Election	-1.904	2.388	-0.797	0.431		
Week	-0.275	0.102	-2.689	0.011*		
Exit	-7.152	2.704	-2.645	0.012*		

Table 18: Democrats Weekly

Variable	Estimate	Standard Error	T Value	P Value	R-Squared	Adjusted R-Squared
Weekly	-0.033	0.028	-1.170	0.246	0.991	0.9903

Clinton	47.777	1.838	25.997	< 2e-16***		
Sanders	33.893	1.950	17.381	< 2e-16***		
Election	-0.586	1.480	-0.396	0.693		
Week	0.286	0.074	3.861	0.0003***		

Table 19: Clinton Rolling

Variable	Estimate	Standard Error	T Value	P Value	R-Squared	Adjusted R-Squared
Intercept	40.147	4.150	9.674	9.84e-11***	0.3058	0.2363
Rolling	0.330	0.110	3.026	0.005**		
Election	-1.326	1.279	-1.037	0.308		
Week	-0.183	0.084	-2.183	0.037*		

Table 20: Clinton Weekly

Variable	Estimate	Standard Error	T Value	P Value	R-Squared	Adjusted R-Squared
Intercept	52.331	1.632	32.063	< 2e-16***	0.09391	0.003296
Weekly	-0.001	0.030	-0.020	0.984		
Election	-1.651	1.530	-1.079	0.289		
Week	-0.019	0.077	-0.244	0.809		

Table 21: Sanders Rolling

Variable	Estimate	Standard Error	T Value	P Value	R-Squared	Adjusted R-Squared
Intercept	39.163	6.150	6.367	5.02e-07***	0.876	0.8636
Rolling	-0.206	0.096	-2.136	0.041*		
Election	1.274	1.131	1.127	0.269		
Week	0.470	0.074	6.349	5.28e-07***		

Table 22: Sanders Weekly

Variable	Estimate	Standard Error	T Value	P Value	R-Squared	Adjusted R-Squared
Intercept	27.646	1.789	15.457	7.88e-16***	0.8615	0.8477
Weekly	-0.023	0.024	-0.979	0.335		
Election	1.455	1.252	1.162	0.254		
Week	0.551	0.063	8.719	1.01e-09***		

From these tables, we see that the rolling percentage was only significant for Sec. Clinton and Sen. Sanders, and was almost significant for Sen. Cruz. This result should not be too surprising to readers, since primary campaigns, as discussed earlier, do not happen in vacuums. The candidates themselves are constantly acting and reacting to the actions of their opponents. When put together, that is where issue ownership is able to shine through, and according to these results, have a negative impact on the candidates trying to talk about the issues they own.

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